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November/December 2023
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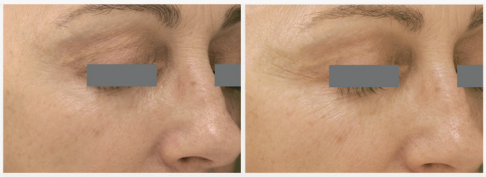

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COLLAGEN P.I.N.® INDUCTION THERAPIES

CLINICAL BREAKTHROUGHS IN ACNE SCAR REVISION:

Combining the Latest Advancements for Optimal Results

A wide variety of treatments for atrophic acne scars have been developed over the years. Every procedure has a different role in treating acne scars, with some treatments better suited for certain scar types than others. With individual scars varying widely in type and depth, it can be difficult to determine the best treatment for the variety of scars you may encounter in aesthetic settings.

TREATMENT	Ice Pick Scars	Rolling Scars	Boxcar Scars
*Chemical Peel (TCA)	++	-	++
CROSS Technique	++	-	++
Microdermabrasion	+	-	+
Laser Therapy	-	++	++
Fractional Laser Therapy	++	++	++
Punch Excision	++	-	+
*Microneedling	++	+	++
Subcision	+	++	+

++ = Effective, + = Less Effective, - = Not Effective

A Pluralistic Approach to Scar Revision

Aesthetics isn't once-size-fits-all. Combining multiple procedures can elicit dramatically improved results to a degree unobtainable by each individual procedure alone. The varying morphology of acne scars, especially when multiple types of scars are found in the same patient, suggests the need for combination therapy to provide the most effective treatment services. The importance of post-procedure care is also critical to optimizing results.

INDUCTION THERAPIES COLLAGEN P.I.N.®

Reference: Effective Treatments of Atrophic Acne Scars; Gozali, Zhou, Lou https://www.ncbi.nlm.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4445894/

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Microneedling has many advantages compared to other resurfacing procedures alone. When performed within a series of conjunctive peel treatments and with suitable post-care, the advantages compound.

- Lower risk of post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation
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Chemical peels are a great way to introduce new patients to the process of skin resurfacing and can be a gateway to more invasive procedures like microneedling.

Donald Clemons, MD
Medical Director at Renovus Medical Spa

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The Collagen P.I.N.® Microneedling Device is FDA cleared as a treatment intended to improve the appearance of facial acne scars in adults with Fitzpatrick Skin Types I - III, aged 22 years and older.



Rebecca Lane

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Innovative Immunity Boosters

Winter has officially arrived and with it cold and flu season, causing people to flock to the pharmacy for their annual vaccines and immune-boosting supplements to stave off the viruses being passed around. Our skin, like our immune system, also needs a boost to stay healthy this time of year and fight off the damaging effects of getting sick, moisture-sapping cold temperatures and other winter stressors. Vitamin C is the go-to immunity booster for our bodies, and the same holds true for protecting and boosting skin's natural defenses. Vitamin C helps neutralize and protect against free radicals and environmental stressors, support the skin microbiome to enhance its natural defenses and optimize overall skin health. While orange juice gives our bodies a boost of vitamin C, here are products to add a bit of vitamin C to your patients' skin care regimen to enhance skin defenses, radiance and brightness in the midst of winter.



Alastin Skincare C-Radical Defense Antioxidant Serum is formulated with a clinically proven form of vitamin C plus 14 vital antioxidants that help protect against environmental stressors such as blue light and pollution while aiding in skin's conservation of elastin. The proprietary encapsulated novel form of vitamin C (Sodium Ascorbate) helps to defend against free radical damage, reducing the effects by up to 74%, while supporting the skin's ability to conserve elastin. This serum gives a major boost of immunity to keep skin healthy and radiant no matter the season.
alastin.com



Alphascience Mela Bright C+ with 3% stable cysteamine is an antioxidant serum used as a safe alternative to hydroquinone. It is clinically proven to be effective against skin discoloration and hyperpigmentation without the concerns of hydroquinone or corticosteroids.
alphascience.com



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LATEST IN LITERATURE



Soda & Male Pattern Hair Loss

A recent study published in *Nutrients* by a group of Chinese nutritional epidemiology researchers investigating dietary factors and patterns with a possible connection to hair loss explored the association between the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSB) and male pattern hair loss (MPHL) in young men.

The cross-sectional study included 1,028 participants from a total of 31 provinces in China, aged 18-45 years. Using a self-reported online survey, researchers collected data submitted by participants from January to April 2022. Using a binary logistic regression model, possible connections between MPHL and the amount and frequency of consuming SSBs were explored, with adjustments made for hair status, lifestyle, dietary intake, sociodemographic and psychological factors, per the report.

Researchers concluded that a high consumption of SSBs was linked to an increased risk of MPHL. Per the report, participants that consumed SSBs more than 7 times a week were significantly (3.36 times) more likely to have MPHL in comparison with participants that did not drink SSBs.

Aesthetic Surgery Continues to Rise in Popularity: ISAPS Survey



The International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ISAPS) has released the results of its annual Global Survey on Aesthetic/Cosmetic Procedures, showing an 11.2% overall increase in procedures performed by plastic surgeons in 2022, with more than 14.9 million surgical and 18.8 million non-surgical procedures performed worldwide. The report shows a continuing rise in aesthetic surgery, with a 41.3% increase over the last four years.

Both surgical and non-surgical procedures showed increases since the last survey (16.7% and 7.2% respectively), with a significant increase of 57.8% in non-surgical procedures in the last four years, per the report.

Liposuction was the most common surgical procedure in 2022, with more than 2.3 million procedures and a 21.1% increase. The top five surgical procedures were liposuction, breast augmentation, eyelid surgery, abdominoplasty and breast lift, which replaced rhinoplasty among the top five.

The most popular non-surgical procedures were botulinum toxin, hyaluronic acid, hair removal, chemical peel and non-surgical fat reduction. Chemical peel replaced non-surgical skin tightening in the top five.

Breast augmentation was the most common surgical procedure for women, with 2.2 million procedures, an increase of 29% compared to 2021. All breast procedures showed notable growth from the previous year, with more than 4.4 million procedures performed, an increase of 25%, per the report. Buttock augmentation experienced the largest increase in surgical procedures, with 820,762 procedures performed, an increase of 56.8% compared to 2021.

Amytrx Novel Peptide AMTX-1000 Treatment for Atopic Dermatitis



Amytrx Therapeutics has announced that their abstract from the Revolutionizing Atopic Dermatitis (RAD) Conference has been published in the *British Journal of Dermatology*. The abstract highlights data that demonstrates the promising safety, tolerability and efficacy outcomes observed with AMTX-100 in a Phase 1 clinical trial in adults with mild to moderate atopic dermatitis.

AMTX-100 is a novel peptide currently being developed by Amytrx Therapeutics for the treatment of inflammatory conditions. In the Phase 1 study, patients experienced substantial improvements in key disease-related parameters, including reduced pruritus and diminished inflammation, as assessed by a visible decrease in affected body surface area. The study also defined maximum-tolerated dosage, as well as safety, tolerability, and efficacy, with no significant adverse events reported.

According to the company, the abstract reinforces the therapeutic potential of their leading peptide formula AMTX-100, a novel chimeric, 100% human peptide that modulates inflammation.



BBL is the Most Searched Cosmetic Procedure in America

The Brazilian butt lift (BBL) is the most in-demand cosmetic surgery in America, according to average monthly search data analyzed by medical experts at med.ro. BBL was the most searched procedure, while the East Coast, specifically Delaware, Rhode Island and Maryland, had the states most interested in plastic surgeries.

The experts at med.ro compiled a list of cosmetic surgeries combined with either “price,” “near me,” “surgery,” “surgeon” and “cost” to discover their total monthly search volume on Google. The East Coast took the crown for the region most interested in plastic surgery, with states in that region making up the top five. Delaware was the most interested in plastic surgery, with 308 cosmetic surgery-related searches for every 100,000 people each month. Rhode Island had an average of 301 cosmetic surgery searches monthly for every 100,000 people. Maryland, in third place, had 299 searches for every 100,000 people. Virginia and Georgia wrapped up the top five with 289 Google searches a month for every 100,000 residents and 287 monthly searches per 100,000 residents, respectively.

The top five most searched procedures include BBL, tummy tuck, hair transplant, liposuction and nose job, but BBL dominated the competition. In Illinois, for example, BBL had an average of 10,265 average monthly searches, more than twice the number of abdominoplasty (aka tummy tucks) average monthly searches. In Texas, BBL and tummy tuck were also the two most searched procedures, but BBL had almost three times as many searches as tummy tuck. Per a survey by the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, the number of BBLs performed globally increased by 77.6% from 2015 to 2021.

AU & PAA Patients Demonstrate Increased Frequency & Severity of Fatty Liver



A study published in the *Journal of Cosmetic Dermatology* examined the frequency of fatty liver in patients with alopecia areata, specifically in relation to the subtypes alopecia universalis (AU) and patchy alopecia areata (PAA).

The study included 32 patients with AU, 32 patients with PAA and 32 participants without hair loss disorders to serve as the control group. The patients with AU and PAA were comprised of individuals referred to a dermatology clinic from September 23, 2019 to September 23, 2020. Researchers recorded the age, weight, height, sex and waist circumference (WC), calculated body mass index (BMI), noted hyperlipidemia and statin use and evaluated liver enzymes for all participants. Disease duration and the Severity of Alopecia Tool (SALT) score were also recorded for AU and PAA patients, and participants received an ultrasound to assess the presence of fatty liver and the degree of severity or its grade.

Per the report, all participants were comparable in age, sex, weight, height, BMI, WC, hyperlipidemia, abnormal liver enzymes and statin use. The group of AU patients demonstrated significantly higher SALT scores and disease duration than the group of PAA patients ($p = 0.009$ and $p < 0.001$, respectively). AU patients demonstrated the highest frequency of fatty liver at 40.6%, with grade-1 fatty liver being most common. PAA patients demonstrated 34.4% frequency of fatty liver, with grade-2 being the most common.

Prevalence of Alopecia in Asian Americans

A 2023 study published in *JAMA Dermatology* sought to establish the prevalence of alopecia areata (AA), alopecia totalis (AT) and alopecia universalis (AU) overall as well as among racial and ethnic subgroups in the U.S.

Researchers of the cross-sectional study analyzed electronic records from the Explorys database (Watson Health and IBM Corporation), which included records of healthcare administered to children, adolescents and adults across the four U.S. census regions in 2019. Per the report, a statistical analysis of these records was conducted in 2022, looking for cases of AA, AT or AU in the 1,093,176 patients that met the inclusion criteria.

Researchers found that 1,812 of the patients included had at least one code in their records for AA, over 65% of which were female and 33% male. 9% of patients diagnosed with AA included AT and AU cases, and the prevalence of cases was highest in patients aged 30-39 years (297 per 100,000) and 40-49 years (270 per 100,000), per the report. Asian American patients demonstrated the highest standardized prevalence, with 414 per 100,000, while African American and Hispanic/Latino patients demonstrated the second and third highest standardized prevalence and Caucasian patients demonstrated the lowest prevalence of AA.











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3 LIGHT THERAPY

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Contact: 833.205.9545, artemis.co

BUSINESS CONSULT BY TERRI ROSS



Strategic Planning for Your Aesthetic Practice in 2024

How to set yourself up for success in 2024.

I can't believe we are almost at the end of 2023. This year has really flown by. Before we dive headfirst into the year-end craziness, I want to talk to you about something crucial you should be doing now to set yourself up for success in 2024 -- creating an annual strategic plan for your aesthetic practice.

Now, I know the idea of strategic planning can be a bit daunting, especially if you've never done it before. But trust me, it's one of those things you can't afford to skip. You can't just wing it. As the saying goes, "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail." So, let's demystify this process.

Why Strategic Planning Matters for Your Aesthetic Practice

First off, let's address the "why" behind strategic planning for your aesthetic practice. It's not just a box to check; it's the compass that guides your success for the next year. Think of it as a performance evaluation for your practice. You need to figure out what went right and evaluate what went wrong that you can improve upon.

Here are some key questions to ask yourself:

- How did we perform this year?
- Where can we realistically take things from here?
- What goals should we set for ourselves and our team?
- What should be our focus?
- What needs changing?
- How are we going to communicate this plan to our team?

Celebrate the Wins & Learn from Them

Recognizing and celebrating your team's accomplishments is vital. It not only boosts morale but also helps create a positive team culture. I truly encourage you to make a list of your wins and involve your staff in this process. Their perspective might

reveal achievements you hadn't considered. Financial successes are great, but remember that "wins" can take various other forms, such as:

- Growth in leads, consultations and closure rates
- Successful events that boosted your practice
- Incorporation of new services, requiring staff to acquire new skills
- Hiring and onboarding new team members
- Cultivating a cohesive team and fostering a positive culture
- Expanding your space or renovating it
- Increasing productivity
- Initiating a loyalty program or enhancing patient communication.

Take a good look at these achievements and figure out what made them successful. Then, instead of dwelling on what didn't work out, focus on the lessons learned. Part of nurturing a positive team culture is creating an environment of continuous improvement.

When reflecting on areas that need improvement, here are some questions to consider:

- What negatively impacted your practice and team?
- Did toxic individuals or discord affect performance or culture?
- Were there service lines or devices that struggled?
- Did you face challenges in patient acquisition or retention?
- Were there team members who weren't a good fit, and what made them unsuitable?
- Are there processes or protocols in need of improvement?
- Has your staff received adequate sales training?
- How's your client feedback? If there's negative feedback, how can you use it to improve?

Evaluating Your Annual Performance

Now, let's dive into the nitty-gritty of assessing your annual performance, including revenue, expenses, budgeting and forecasts. These numbers are the gears that drive your practice's engine.

Revenue: Don't just look at gross revenue; you need to look at net revenue after all expenses are deducted. Also, you must evaluate revenue by category. Knowing your numbers regarding Profit per Treatment and Revenue per Hour is crucial for your practice's growth.

Expenses: Keep your total expenses in check. I constantly hear practices say they need to reduce expenses, but then they cut back on the wrong things. Assess the costs of goods for each treatment to ensure your profit margins are aligned and you are not overspending. If something seems off, perhaps it's time to find a new vendor with better pricing.

Revenue Per Hour and Profit Per Treatment: These two metrics are your secret weapons. They tell you which areas of your practice generate the highest profit margins and where to focus your efforts. You should review these numbers regularly, at least quarterly.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Provider productivity, provider capacity and utilization are essential KPIs to track. Review how many hours providers work compared to your operating hours, revenue-generating hours, available room hours, provider capacity and operational utilization. These metrics help you determine when it's time to expand or make workflow improvements.

Forecasting and Budgeting

Now, let's talk about forecasting and budgeting. These are educated estimates of where your practice's finances will be in the future. When creating your annual strategic plan, consider the current year to plan for the upcoming one. Forecasting refers to anticipated revenue. Budgeting refers to both the revenue and expenses and how they balance together.

Once you have your forecast and budget, it's time to set goals for the coming year and develop a plan to achieve them.





Setting Goals & Planning for the Year Ahead

When setting goals, think beyond just financial targets. Consider operational goals as well. What do you want to achieve in your practice in the upcoming year? The key isn't the quantity of goals but the quality and the strategies to reach them.

For example, after analyzing your capacity and utilization, you might set a goal to hire two new team members or consider letting go of someone who doesn't fit. Maybe you need more space or longer operating hours. Your goals should also encompass compensation structures.

Don't forget individual team member goals, especially for annual reviews. Measure what each employee accomplished and what they need to improve upon.

Once you've set your goals, create a strategic plan to execute them. Use data such as profit per treatment, revenue per hour and your forecast and budget to make informed business decisions.

Some questions to consider are:

- Where should you focus your efforts?
- Do you have the most efficient and cost-effective employees handling specific services?
- Are your providers meeting industry benchmarks for revenue per hour?
- What are your highest-margin services? (Remember, the highest-grossing service isn't always the most profitable.)
- Which product lines perform the best? Focus on the top ones.
- Is there a service category that isn't profitable? Consider additional training or more marketing.

When planning, ask yourself:

- What do you want to accomplish this year?
- Are capital purchases on the horizon?
- Do you plan to introduce a new service line?
- Is your facility due for updates?
- Do you want to expand your team?
- Do you want to invest in team culture or employee assessments?
- What new processes, protocols or training do you need?
- Do you have clear job descriptions and room for employee growth?
- Can you reduce expenses by going paperless or renegotiating service costs?

These are the details that affect your revenue and expenses for the year ahead.

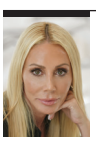
Sharing the Plan with Your Team

Setting a big, overall financial goal like, "We want to grow by one million dollars or 10% this year," can be hard to grasp and motivate your staff. Break those goals down into smaller, more digestible monthly or quarterly targets. This approach makes it easier to understand and stay on track.

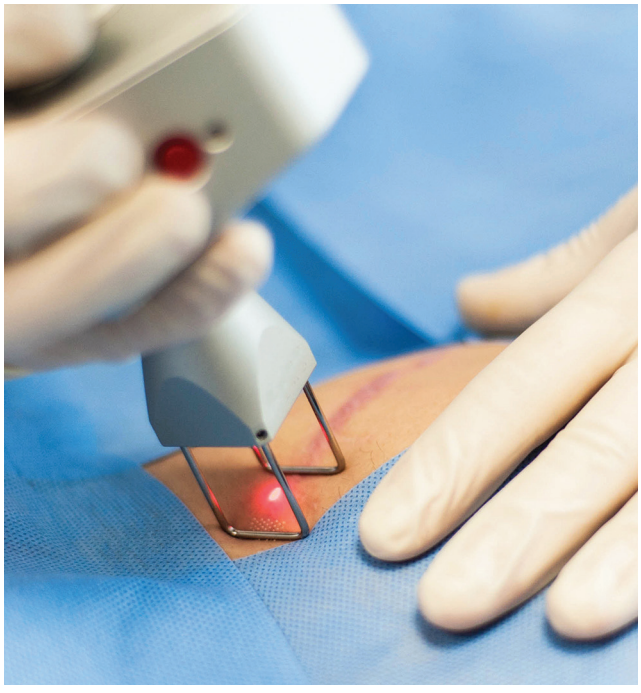
Consider seasonality too. Not all months are created equal for your practice. If January tends to be slow historically, don't set the same goal as you do for busier months. If you have an incentive-based program, set productivity goals for your team. Provide them with a timeline and ensure they have the training and resources to meet these goals.

When sharing your goals and strategic plan with your team, you don't need to inundate them with all your financial data. However, you do need to communicate your plan, your overall goals, how everyone should work together and individual goals. Transparency and clear expectations are key.

Cheers to your success in 2024! ME



Terri Ross is a world-renowned practice management expert, thought leader, and international speaker in the medical aesthetic industry. She founded APX Platform in 2021. In 2023 after only two years post-launch, APX merged with Engage Technologies Group to offer a complete practice performance system, encompassing practice optimization and patient engagement. Terri now serves as President of Aesthetics at Engage Technologies Group.



Scar Treatments

Scars are one of the most common skin concerns in medical aesthetics, and there are many options to treat scars, including chemical peels, microneedling, laser surgery, fat grafting and more. We tapped industry experts to discuss what new trends they are seeing in scar treatments.

"Embark on a journey towards scar-free confidence, acknowledging the significant impact scars can have on self-esteem. Popular specialized treatments and products tailored for scars include IPL, PRP, PRF laser therapy and RF microneedling. Combining derma stamping with cyto-glo serum, enriched with exosomes, for home maintenance yields superior results. Microneedling, widely favored in medspas, effectively reduces scars and promotes smoother skin over time. Harnessing the power of exosomes in conjunction with microneedling techniques consistently produces exceptional outcomes. Ablative laser therapy, a form of skin resurfacing that removes the top or outer layer of the skin surface to eliminate damaged skin cells, can fade scars, but involves more downtime. In select cases, scars can be expertly concealed with tattoos using precise skin-color pigments, ensuring a seamless blend."
—Cheryl Whitman, CEO of Beautiful Forever

"Sofwave's ultrasound technology kickstarts collagen, elastin and hyaluronic acid production in the skin's deeper layers, where acne scars reside. Our multi-center study of patients with moderate to severe acne scars yielded impressive results, including 88% of participants noticing improvements in the appearance of their acne scars after only three treatment sessions. Sofwave can make a significant difference in the appearance of older acne scars in patients with skin laxity that have been tough to tackle before. It's a great solution for patients who want to feel more confident in their skin."
—Anne M. Chapas, M.D., board-certified dermatologist, founder and medical director of UnionDerm and a principal investigator of the study.

"I find using the Aerolase Reverse works surprisingly well for small scars. For keloids, we team up with a radiologist who performs superficial radiation treatment after we excise the keloid."
—Chesahna Kindred, M.D., M.B.A., FAAD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THE PYRAMID OF SUCCESS:

6 Steps to Create An Unstoppable Marketing Strategy

Deconstructing digital marketing strategies from the bottom up.

By Michael Olson, Practice Growth Consultant at MyAdvice

In today's digital world, the primary sources for growth, referrals and the internet, have become intertwined. Both are vital elements of a solid marketing strategy that will maximize your practice's potential for success. Nurturing referral sources and incoming referrals should be a top priority when growing your practice and reputation. However, once a potential client is referred to you, they will first look to your website and online presence to judge whether they should place their trust in you before reaching out to schedule a consult. The initial referral may have planted the seed of trust, but your digital marketing strategy is what nurtures that seed and draws those potential clients into your office.

Building a solid marketing plan for a medical spa means understanding how marketing strategies fit together. MyAdvice created the Pyramid of Success for just that reason: giving you a solid foundation to build your practice's growth, with levers you can adjust as needed to suit your growth needs. Whether you're looking for more growth or just want to know how to create the best version of your own marketing strategy, this article will explain the philosophy, as well as how each layer of the pyramid works to support the others.

THE PYRAMID OF SUCCESS: 6 STEPS TO CREATE AN UNSTOPPABLE MARKETING STRATEGY



1. Build a Solid Marketing Foundation with Your Website

Why is your website the foundation of your marketing strategy? Because it's the face of your practice, and the final destination for most of your marketing strategies. What makes up a good website? A few things. First off, your website needs to be secure. Most people don't realize just how important this is, because it's not something you think about until there's an issue. Websites that don't utilize secure socket layer (SSL) certificates aren't able to use HTTPS web addresses. Not only does that make them more vulnerable to cyber-attacks and problems, but it also means that web browsers will display a warning to users who visit. Usually, that means they'll just leave - which means your traffic will suffer and you'll potentially earn penalties from search engines.

Next, let's talk about conversions and content. The way your website is set up is incredibly important. Put simply, a conversion element is any point on your website where a visitor converts into a client. That could be a form, a button or a chat widget. If your website isn't converting visitors into clients, it's not doing its job. If visitors can't find what they're looking for, your content is falling short too. Clients are likely coming to your website to get information about what you do and how you do it. Are they finding what they're looking for? Having a page for every service you offer that includes answers to the most frequently asked questions about your services is a good starting point. From there, starting a blog, creating case studies or testimonials from your clients and an About Us page that lists your locations and hours is a logical next step.

2. Achieve Local Visibility with Local Search Optimization

There are plenty of reasons to utilize local search as a marketing strategy. The first is that nearly half of all searches in 2022 contained some variation of "near me," which means about half of all searchers are looking for businesses local to them. Another big reason? If you aren't actively managing and optimizing your local search profiles, automatically-generated profiles with incorrect information are likely to pop up, frustrating users who are looking for information about your practice, and causing you to rank lower in searches. So, how do you improve your local search rankings? Step one is claiming your listings so you have the ability to control them. Whether you're using a maps app like Google or Apple Maps or a directory service, every platform will have its own requirements to verify you own the business profile you're claiming or creating. Once you're in control of your profile, correcting inaccurate information is your biggest priority. This isn't a one and done kind of task either because information on most platforms can be changed automatically or by user suggestions, so auditing your profiles regularly to correct inaccurate information is important.

Once your listings are straightened out, it's time to start optimizing them. That means adding information beyond the basics, like your name, address and phone number (aka NAP info). Google and other search engines utilize "relevance" as one of the search metrics to rank local search profiles, which measures how likely your business is to provide the service or product the searcher is looking for. Without complete profile information, it's hard for search engines to tell precisely what your

business does. So filling out the primary and secondary categories your business falls under, adding photos of your business, including all of the services you provide, your business attributes and hours and all of the additional contact information people might be looking for, like your social media and website links, can make a huge difference. Optimization also involves regularly posting new photos and updates on your profile to show that your profile has active updates.

3. Manage Your Reputation Through Reviews

Reviews have become incredibly important in today's digital healthcare landscape, providing social trust to potential clients. They also impact local search in a huge way. In a survey MyAdvice conducted earlier this year, 57% of the businesses we polled told us that generating new reviews had the most positive impact on their local search performance. They're incredibly important to potential clients interested in your practice as well as search engines (that's right, search engines are indexing your reviews).

Three things matter when it comes to reviews: the number of reviews, the overall sentiment of the reviews and your responses. How do you get more reviews? The simple answer is…you ask. Setting up an automated system to request reviews from patients via text or email will save your staff tons of time. In addition, since very few businesses have perfect five-star scores, you need to have a system in place to respond to negative reviews in a way that maintains HIPAA compliance before they even happen.

4. Develop Your Social Presence with Social Media

Starting social media profiles from scratch can be overwhelming, but there are a few things you can do to help speed up the process of figuring out what works and what doesn't. To start, decide what your goal is for your profiles because that will help you decide what your strategy will be. Do you want to bring in new patients? Think about integrating your procedures and happy patient testimonials into your social content. Are you focused on retaining the patients you have and motivating them to visit again? Focus on running specials that encourage return visits. Next, think about your target audience. You probably already have an idea of which social media platforms they're most likely to use and what types of content they're most likely to respond to. Identify which content types you want to try out, whether that's holiday content, giveaways, contests, educational content or content that promotes your expertise. Choose one or two social media platforms to start with so that you and your team don't get overwhelmed.

Then it's time to start posting and, more importantly, measuring. You're going to want to pay attention to a few specific metrics. Engagement rate, or the rate users comment, like or share a post, clickthrough rate, the rate which users click a link in a post and conversion rate, which is the rate at which users take a desired action like filling out a form or making a purchase, are metrics that indicate a post is performing well. Remember, it takes time to build a social media audience – in fact, it's a good sign if your audience is building slowly but surely. That means you're finding the right people, and your audience is authentic.



Maximizing your site's SEO helps connect searchers with your website.

5. Maximize Your Website's Search Engine Optimization

While good websites are developed with search engine optimization already in mind, there are ways to maximize your website's SEO even further. To start, make sure you understand and select the right keywords. Keywords are what connects searchers with your website, as they are the words and phrases people type into search engines that potentially will land them on your website. The phrases you use to tell search engines what you do, which procedures you offer, and who you are need to match what people are searching for – and getting this

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right is an art form. From your website content to your title tags and meta descriptions, make sure your keywords are utilized to tell search engines and searchers alike exactly what it is you do.

Speaking of content, showcasing your expertise through the creation of high-quality content is still a valuable use of time. Instead of trying to turn out lots of content, you're better served by producing 2 or 3 posts per month, which can be repurposed for social media content. Content is still king, and showcasing expertise and answering client questions via your website goes a long way towards building trust with potential clients. Another great way to build trust? Utilize an About Us page to tell potential clients about your staff, your credentials and other background information. According to a study we conducted this year, 68% of people view a well-crafted About Us page as one of the things that makes them trust a website the most.



6. Snag Top Search Engine Real Estate with Paid Search Campaigns

Paid search (also known as PPC) can be a complicated, expensive strategy in the wrong hands. The concept is simple: you're bidding on keywords in an auction run by a search engine. The advertiser who wins gets the coveted top spot on the search engine results page. Because this is a paid strategy, it can get expensive and frustrating if you don't know what you're doing. That's why it lives at the top of the Pyramid. While it's certainly a valuable part of a marketing strategy that's ready for it, jumping straight into PPC before you have a website is a great way to spend a ton of money and see frustrating results.

If you're ready to incorporate paid search into your strategy, here's how to start. Step one is keyword research, so while this strategy is similar to SEO, it's ultimately a little bit different in that you're researching what other people are bidding on in addition to what people are searching for. Next, you have to create landing pages and ads. Pay close attention to the quality of each, as Quality Score is one of the main metrics used to determine if you will win a paid search auction. From there, you set up your targeting parameters, manage your budget and watch carefully to see what's performing well. With time, you'll begin to see what works and what doesn't. ME



Michael Olson has been helping medical practices grow since 2018. He started as a device rep and has been a Practice Growth Consultant for MyAdvice since 2020. Having been in and out of hundreds of aesthetic offices in person, he understands the flow & day-to-day operations of successful practices. What sets Michael apart is his ability to teach you how to match your in-office success with a growth-oriented online presence to drive higher-quality patients into your chairs. After all, it doesn't matter how good you are in person if your web presence stops patients from seeing it.

MyAdvice empowers business owners and professionals to increase their revenue by attracting and retaining more clients through digital marketing. Our SaaS-based platform enables hands-on control and visibility into the performance of online marketing activities, backed by 20+ years of best practices and expertise on how to maximize those efforts. MyAdvice's six-stage Pyramid of SuccessTM provides a proven step-by-step plan for how and when to implement growth-oriented marketing tactics for the greatest impact, including website design and maintenance, local directories, customer reviews, social media, search engine optimization (SEO) and paid advertising. Learn more at myadvice.com.

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PHARMACEUTICAL EYELID LIFT: A BRIDGE TO SURGERY

A drop to address drooping lids finds a home in surgical practices.

By Andrew Harrison, M.D.

The periocular region of the face is one of the first things that others notice about us, and unfortunately, it is also one of the first areas to show signs of aging. Demand for upper facial rejuvenation—in both men and women—has dramatically increased in the past decade. In the last 10 years, eyelid surgery has been one of the top five most commonly performed surgical procedures, along with facelift (rhytidectomy) and rhinoplasty.[1]

Blepharoptosis, or simply ptosis, refers to when the upper eyelid droops with the eyes in the primary position of gaze. Drooping of the eyelids, which can occur in all age groups and is caused by a variety of factors, may produce a functional or a cosmetic deficit. Aponeurotic ptosis, also known as involutional ptosis, is the most prevalent form of the condition in adults, and it is most often due to dehiscence or disinsertion of the levator aponeurosis.[2]

Blepharoplasty, which also can be performed for functional or cosmetic reasons, rearranges excess tissue in the lid. Ptosis repair, on the other hand, tightens the levator or Muller's muscle to lift the lid and open the eye wider. My colleagues and I have found that about 50% of the patients that present to our practice seeking eyelid rejuvenation actually require a combination of both of these procedures.

Blepharoplasty Considerations

Many patients will seek blepharoplasty for cosmetic concerns related to the amount of excess skin or dermatochalasis. Significant excess upper lid skin or fat protrusion (steatoblepharon) can cause hooding and visual obstruction, and the presence of either is an indication for upper lid blepharoplasty. Care must be taken not to remove an excessive amount of skin or fat during resection.

The most common complications of blepharoplasty involve uneven folds, inappropriately high or low folds or multiple folds, which are correctable by reoperation. Postoperative lagophthalmos may occur if too much skin is removed. Small amounts of lagophthalmos are tolerable and easily managed, but significant lagophthalmos can lead to corneal complications. Other complications such as infection, stitch abscess and excessive bleeding are rare.

Ptosis Repair Considerations

The standard of care for ptosis management is surgical intervention, with a variety of techniques being successful for elevating the upper eyelid. The procedure (or combination of procedures) is selected based on underlying etiology and severity; Muller's muscle is commonly targeted for posterior approach or "scarless" ptosis repair. Despite the well-known benefits of surgery, it is not ideal for some patients. The most common risks range from those that are temporary such as bleeding,



Upneeq fills a need for patients interested in blepharoplasty but not quite ready, or as a "test" to see what they look like with a more wide open eye.

bruising and infection, to more lasting events such as scarring, eyelid crease abnormalities, over- or under-correction and eyelid asymmetry.

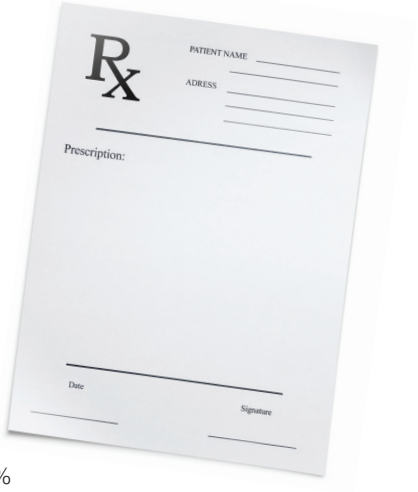
One retrospective analysis revealed that revision was required in 8.7% of ptosis surgery cases, with a 6.8% revision rate in patients who underwent a posterior-approach procedure and a 9.5% revision rate in those who underwent an anterior-approach procedure.[3] Over- and under-correction were identified as the predominant reasons for revision.



Pharmaceutical Lid Lift Fills A Niche

Until recently, there really were no noninvasive, nonsurgical solutions to correct eye lid changes. Upneeq (oxymetazoline hydrochloride ophthalmic solution 0.1%; RVL Pharmaceuticals, Inc.) is the first FDA-approved pharmaceutical treatment indicated for acquired blepharoptosis in adults. The active ingredient works to stimulate the alpha-adrenergic receptors on Muller's muscle, which results in temporary contraction and eyelid elevation. Approved for everyday use, it starts working within 20 minutes and one drop lasts for about 6 to 8 hours.

As an oculoplastic surgeon, I was skeptical when I was first introduced to Upneeq. I even thought it might be a potential threat. Once I gained experience and became more familiar with the agent, I realized there were situational uses for it in my practice. For example, some patients experience a temporary ptosis from neurotoxin injections. The drop is perfect for providing a fix in this situation. I began to understand that it could fill a need for patients who are interested in surgery but not quite ready, or as a "test" to see what they look like with a more wide open eye.



There are many reasons patients might opt for a nonsurgical option. Some may not be good candidates for surgery and others may be concerned with downtime—1 to 2 weeks of bruising and swelling. There is always a chance of asymmetry, and about 5-10% of patients will require more than one surgery. With the increasing popularity of lid procedures—and cosmetic procedures in general—there can be a several month delay before getting an appointment with a surgeon, and some patients do not want to wait for a solution.

I have found Upneeq to be particularly helpful for demonstrating to patients what a ptosis repair will do for them. Although the drop opens the eyelid wider, patients with heavy lids will see the extra skin sag and fall over the lid margin. This shows patients that ptosis repair alone, without blepharoplasty to address the excess fat and skin, will not provide the results they are seeking.

Conclusion

Upneeq has been a great tool in the medical aesthetics toolbox for treating patients with upper eyelid conditions. In my experience, there is virtually no downside and almost no side effects. The overwhelming majority of patients who have tried it were pleased with the result and the way they look. They noted feeling like they look younger. I have come to think of this low-risk, high-reward pharmaceutical option for lifting the lid as a bridge to surgery. ME

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ADVERTORIAL

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Innovative technologies like the Aerolase Neo Elite have paved the way for the growing demand for device-based aesthetics and medical procedures. It offers various benefits, including ease of use, combining treatments, and exceptional safety. With the Neo Elite, clinicians can deliver optimal results while ensuring patient comfort and satisfaction. As the field continues to evolve, the Neo Elite stands at the forefront of this revolution, driving the industry toward a future of advanced, patient-centered care.



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Hydrafacial, dermaplaning and Neo Elite
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2 Aerolase Neo Elite testaments, 1 Skinpen microneedling treatments
Photo courtesy Adam Swigost, MD



3 chemical peels, 2 Aerolase Neo Elite testaments, 2 Skinpen microneedling treatments
Photo courtesy Savanna Boda



After 3 Neo Elite sessions, 1 micropen & 1 chemical peel
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After 2 Neo Elite sessions & 1 Perfect Derma Peel
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Neo Elite Laser with Chemical Peel
Photo courtesy Savanna Boda

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AWAKENING TO THE CONCEPT

"Awake liposuction" as an alternative to twilight or general anesthesia.

By Darren M. Smith, M.D., FACS

AWAKE LIPOSUCTION IS one of our most popular procedures, and demand is only increasing as time goes on. While the term "awake liposuction" is a bit vague, as it could potentially refer to twilight anesthesia since one is technically "awake" in this setting, the term practically applies to liposuction procedures performed without any form of intravenous or inhalational sedation. Success with awake liposuction is predicated on proper patient selection. In the right patient, awake liposuction can be a great alternative to twilight or general anesthesia. Choosing an awake approach for the wrong case can, however, lead to potentially dangerous situations or suboptimal aesthetic outcomes. We regularly perform awake liposuction for small treatment areas such as the chin, arms and flanks with great success.

DEFINITIONS OF ANESTHESIA VARIATIONS

There is a great deal of confusion surrounding liposuction vocabulary, and this definitely applies to the kind of anesthesia used for these cases. There are essentially three forms of liposuction with respect to the kind of anesthesia used: awake, IV sedation (or "twilight") and general anesthesia.

In awake liposuction, local anesthesia is used to numb the area being treated. This takes the form of a "tumescent solution" that is introduced to the treatment area through small entry points. Oral anxiolytics like Valium and pain medications like Tylenol are often used to provide additional comfort.

General anesthesia, on the other hand, refers to a state in which the patient is completely asleep and breathing with the assistance of a machine and has their airway protected with a tube, as they will not be conscious enough to protect their own airway.

"Twilight" anesthesia is a middle-ground between awake liposuction and general anesthesia. Twilight anesthesia makes use of IV medication to precisely titrate a patient's level of wakefulness to ensure their comfort during the procedure. Patients breathe on their own during these procedures and typically drift in and out of sleep.

APPROPRIATE CASES

Careful patient selection is critical to success with awake liposuction. The patient should be in good general health and free from underlying anxiety. If underlying anxiety is present, it should be well controlled. Patients that have a self-proclaimed "low pain tolerance" are also not ideal candidates for this approach, as even though these procedures are not very uncomfortable, patients tend to know their own limits, and we should listen to them. Additionally, awake liposuction is best suited to patients that are on the smaller side and want to treat one or two small areas of concern. Cases like this lend themselves to adequate pain control with safe levels of lidocaine.

Pain control is not only important with respect to patient comfort but also directly impacts the quality of the aesthetic results. Significant patient discomfort can limit the aggressiveness of the surgeon, and thereby lead to an inadequate volume of fat removal or even a premature end to the case before the entire area of concern can be treated.



"Careful patient selection is critical to success with awake liposuction."

ADVANTAGES

Awake liposuction offers several advantages over traditional liposuction performed under general anesthesia in properly selected patients. Awake liposuction mitigates some of the risks associated with general anesthesia. These risks include things like unfavorable reactions to the medications being used and blood clots in the legs that can travel to the lungs as pulmonary emboli. These are very rare events and must be balanced against the potential downsides of awake liposuction, discussed below.

Awake liposuction is generally less expensive than its traditional counterpart. This is because you avoid the costs involved with a general anesthetic or IV sedation, most notably the cost of an anesthesiologist. For cases



Awake liposuction requires excellent technique and paying close attention to patient anxiety levels to ensure maximum comfort.

better performed with general anesthesia or IV sedation, the cost of a board-certified anesthesiologist is well worth it.

Patients undergoing awake liposuction often experience a more rapid recovery in the immediate postoperative period, as they do not need to wait for the effects of IV or inhalational anesthetic agents to wear off. The absence of these medications is also typically associated with less postoperative nausea and vomiting. Patients can often leave the surgery center on their own after liposuction with local anesthesia. This is not the case for patients undergoing traditional liposuction.

DISADVANTAGES

Local anesthesia liposuction has gained popularity due to its potentially lower cost and perceived safety in comparison to traditional liposuction performed under general anesthesia. However, it is not the right choice for every patient, and it is not safe for all procedures.

First, local anesthesia liposuction relies on lidocaine in the tumescent solution to keep the patient comfortable. While this is reasonable for smaller cases, when multiple or high-volume areas are involved, the safe dose of lidocaine may be exceeded, meaning pain cannot be effectively controlled. Therefore, the area that can be effectively treated with local liposuction is limited. Awake liposuction may also be uncomfortable if it is not performed with excellent technique.

Performing liposuction awake also requires paying close attention to the patient's anxiety level. While in properly selected patients, anxiety surrounding the procedure can be very effectively managed, this is not something we need to consider with twilight or general anesthesia. In some instances, the case may take longer under local anesthesia to ensure maximal patient comfort.

PARTING THOUGHTS

For the right patient, awake liposuction can be a wonderful way to achieve one's aesthetic goals without the downtime of major surgery. This is one of the most common procedures we perform, and I enthusiastically stand by the value of this procedure. Success can vary widely, however, based on surgeon experience and patient selection. When these variables are optimized, awake liposuction is a gratifying procedure to perform that achieves high levels of patient satisfaction. ME



Darren Smith, M.D., FACS is a board certified plastic surgeon practicing in New York City. He is a known expert in aesthetic surgery and cosmetic injectable treatments.



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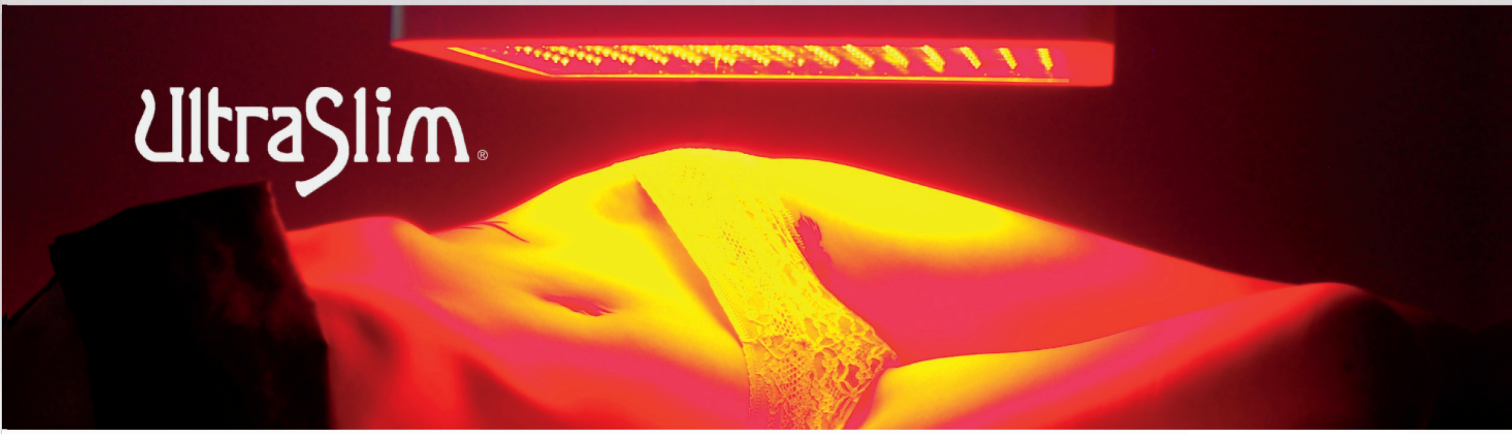

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The Evolution Of Chemical Peels

Innovations in transforming the appearance of problematic skin.

In the realm of skin care, chemical peels have long been a trusted method to enhance the benefits of collagen production and produce healthier-looking and more radiant skin. Over the years, they've undergone significant advancements, offering innovative solutions for a wide array of skin issues. From easing the appearance of acne scars to combating the signs of aging, chemical peels have come a long way in delivering remarkable results, but only more recently have they begun offering minimal downtime. In this article, we'll dive into the exciting world of chemical peels, exploring the latest cutting-edge techniques and formulations that are revolutionizing skin care treatments.

Understanding Chemical Peels

So, what exactly are chemical peels? Essentially, they are dermatological procedures that employ specially formulated chemicals or solutions to exfoliate and rejuvenate the appearance of skin. This process jumpstarts the skin's natural renewal mechanism, leading to a smoother, more youthful-looking complexion. The beauty of chemical peels lies in their versatility, as they can be tailored to different skin types and concerns.

Traditionally, medical-grade chemical peels were primarily categorized as superficial, medium-depth or deep peels based on their penetration depth into the

skin. Superficial peels were typically used for milder issues like dullness and fine lines. Medium-depth peels were effective for addressing moderate problems such as acne scars and pigmentation, while deep peels were reserved for severe skin damage and deep wrinkles.

Cutting-Edge Formulations

One of the most exciting developments in the realm of chemical peels is the improvement in formulations. Innovative ingredients and delivery systems have enhanced the effectiveness of peels while minimizing discomfort, mitigating risk and reducing downtime to almost zero. Let's explore some of these cutting-edge formulations:

- **Alpha Hydroxy Acids (AHAs):** AHAs, like glycolic acid and lactic acid, have been trusted staples in chemical peels. Glycolic acid is a smaller molecule and as such, can offer a higher reactive rate in sensitive skins. Therefore, lactic acid is being favored for its stability, predictability and large molecular size, making it a safe option for those sensitive or darker Fitzpatrick skins. It also offers the added benefits of improving hydration levels and evening out the look of uneven skin tone.
- **Beta Hydroxy Acids (BHAs):** Salicylic acid, a BHA, is famous for its ability to more easily access oily skin's pores, unclog them and minimize their appearance. The latest BHA peels come in various concentrations, allowing for precise customization, which is well noted since higher concentrations are contraindicated during pregnancy and can cause significant burns. Hence, the EU's COLIPA limitations to formulations containing up to 2%.
- **Enzymatic Peels:** These peels use natural enzymes like papain and bromelain to gently exfoliate the skin, making them perfect for those with sensitive skin or those seeking a milder option. Their action is immediate, whereas traditional chemical peels may have a longer lasting affect in the skin, yielding better and longer lasting results.
- **TCA (Trichloroacetic Acid) Peels:** TCA is another fantastic option in chemical peels. It's effective for addressing a range of skin concerns, including the look of fine lines, pigmentation issues and even some types of scars. TCA peels can be customized in strength to suit different skin types and concerns. At lower percentages combined with effective pH's below 2, the combination offers an innovative opportunity to stimulate the benefits of growth factors and rejuvenation without actually having to peel the skin.

Customized Solutions

Now, here's where it gets even more exciting. Innovative peels aren't a one-size-fits-all solution anymore. Skin care professionals can now customize peels to meet the specific needs of each individual. This customization involves tailoring the peel choice, concentration, pH and application method to address individual skin concerns. Here are some examples:

- **Layered Peels:** Skin care professionals can apply multiple layers of different peels during a single session to address a range of skin issues. For instance, successively applying and then dehydrating gel peels to cool the skin and simultaneously concentrate the peel.
- **Sequential Peels:** In this approach, patients undergo a series of peels over time, gradually increasing the strength and depth of the treatment to achieve more profound results while minimizing side effects.
- **Spot Treatments:** Some innovative peels are formulated for spot treatments, allowing for precise targeting of problem areas like acne scars or hyperpigmentation.
- **Combination Therapies:** Peels are often used in conjunction with other treatments like microneedling, dermaplaning or laser therapy to amplify results and improve the overall texture and tone of the skin.



Cutting-Edge Techniques

In addition to innovative formulations and customization options, there have been significant advancements in the techniques used for chemical peels. Skin care professionals are continuously refining their methods to ensure safety, efficacy and patient comfort:

- **Microneedling-Assisted Peels:** Combining microneedling with chemical peels is gaining popularity. The micro-injuries created by microneedling enhance the effectiveness of peel ingredients, promoting the benefits of collagen production and improving the overall appearance of skin texture.
- **Low-Downtime Peels:** Many innovative peels are designed to have minimal downtime, allowing patients to get back to their regular activities more quickly. These low-downtime options are especially attractive to individuals with busy schedules.
- **Fractionated Peels:** Fractional laser technology has inspired a new approach to chemical peels. Fractionated peels deliver the benefits of a traditional peel in a more controlled manner, reducing the risk of complications and speeding up recovery.
- **Non-Ablative Peels:** Non-ablative peels use innovative techniques that do not remove the outer layer of the skin entirely. Instead, they target the deeper layers, promoting the benefits of collagen growth without the extended recovery period associated with traditional peels.

Safety and Precautions

While these cutting-edge techniques and formulations offer exciting possibilities for improving the appearance of problem skin, it's crucial to prioritize safety and consult with industry experts in manufacturing and education. Here are some considerations:

- **Professional Assessment:** Before undergoing any chemical peel, patients should receive a thorough assessment by a specially trained skin care professional, who can determine the most suitable peel type and concentration based on their skin type and concerns.
- **Sun Protection:** After a peel, the skin is more susceptible to damage from the sun. Patients should be vigilant about sun protection, using broad-spectrum sunscreen and avoiding excessive sun exposure.
- **Pre-Peel Preparation:** Some peels may require patients to prepare their skin in the weeks leading up to the treatment. This can include discontinuing certain skin care products and medications to minimize the risk of complications. Pre-peel preparation with corrective skin care also provides the advantage of ensuring maximum benefit of results.
- **Post-Peel Care:** Following a peel, patients should adhere to a specific skin care regimen as advised by their professional. This may involve gentle cleansing, moisturizing and the use of prescribed products and specific ingredients, such as vitamin A, vitamin C and vitamin E, to enhance results and minimize possible side effects.



Conclusion

Innovative chemical peels and cutting-edge techniques have transformed the way we approach problem skin. With a focus on customization, safety and minimal downtime, these advancements are providing individuals with more options than ever to achieve healthier-looking, more radiant skin. As technology and skin care science continue to evolve, the future holds even more exciting possibilities for achieving the skin of our dreams. ME



Candace Noonan, **Director Of Education, DermaConcepts**. Candace is a driven and accomplished educator in the skincare industry, known for her expertise and passion. As Director of Education for DermaConcepts, distributor of Environ Skincare in the US, she delivers engaging training sessions and also works as a consultant and coach for skin care professionals. Candace aims to improve the quality of life for people worldwide by promoting healthy, beautiful skin through education and empowerment.

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MASTERING THE MEDICAL SPA

Jenapher Moguel & Andre Yousefia, M.D., Join Forces to Provide the Perfect Patient Experience at La Belle Vie Medspa.

Written by Rebecca Lane

Growing up in Downey, California, Jenapher Moguel admits to being far more influenced by the punk rock scene during her formative years, her once shaved head seemingly at odds with her now polished beauty and long tresses. Despite being just south of the beauty-consumed entertainment industry in Los Angeles, she never imagined she would one day be involved in the very business of aesthetics. Jenapher recalls her mother's strong work ethic and the impact it had on her.



Enter La Belle Vie Medspa to a welcoming reception at the front desk.

"Growing up my mom always told me to be smart and focus on school, so I was pretty scholarly. I was always constantly moving, going, 'What else can I do?' My mom always told me to be successful but she never told me to apply sunscreen, so I would say that I kind of grew up completely oblivious to any of that. I was merely focused on working hard. I had zero to no interest in anything that was beauty related. It wasn't until I turned almost 30 and personally started seeing signs of aging that I began thinking I should probably start paying attention to how people are taking care of their skin."

Her first job as a receptionist at a medical billing firm would end up launching her on a path to becoming the medspa success she is today. What started with her branching off to establish her own medical billing business, expanded into contracting, credentialing and finally, every aspect of business management for medical professionals. Moguel states, "Most of my career was in the business side of medicine and practice management. So, I have a lot of experience in the medical business and management field, which ended up perfectly complementing my eventual foray into the medical spa industry."

At the same time, Moguel also fell into entertainment production when her husband decided to pursue his desire to be a blacksmith in one of the few industries where it's still in demand for individuals with this specialized skillset, the world of prop making. Consequently, while he fashioned swords and weapons for movies like "Pirates of the Caribbean" and "The Last Samurai", Moguel utilized her business management skills for medical practices and translated them into managing the budget and other business aspects of film production.

She would find these same finely honed business management skills taking her career in the medical world to new levels once again. However, this time she would be the driving force behind designing a medical spa business from the ground up, thanks to the unwavering faith and support of one of her regular medical business management clients, Andre Yousefia, M.D.

A New Venture: Building a Medspa

After studying cellular and molecular biology during his undergraduate years, Dr. Yousefia graduated from Sackler School of Medicine in 1996. After residency, he went on to build a thriving medical practice specializing in internal medicine in Thousand Oaks. Dr. Yousefia's extensive research on PRP, immuno-reactivity and muscle infarction, in addition to his interest in these overlapping areas of traditional medicine, wellness aesthetics and medical aesthetics would prove serendipitous for his next undertaking.

After overcoming a stroke, Dr. Yousefia wished to start a new venture, one that would combine his years of medical experience with wellness aesthetics technology and modalities. His first step was to turn to his trusted long-time business/practice management advisor, Jenapher Moguel.

"Dr. Yousefia, our medical director and one of my clients in my practice management business, came to me and said he wanted to start something else, asking, 'What business ideas do you have in mind that you want to do?' We went through a couple possibilities. I have my real estate license, so I suggested we could do a multi-home project, duplexes, etc. Then I mentioned my interest in getting into medical aesthetics. It's popular, is always going to be a service people are interested in and the demand only seems to be increasing with time. So I said, 'I would want to open a medspa, but I can't. You can, though.'"

Dr. Yousefia was equally enthusiastic about the idea, so Moguel put together the business plan and presented it to him. After the details were approved, they found a suitable location and began construction.



Andre Yousefia, M.D.

Balancing Business & Aesthetics Expertise

Moguel and Dr. Yousefia combined their skillsets to form a perfectly balanced team, taking advantage of their individual strengths to form an ideal synergistic partnership. This is what has truly allowed their medspa to find such overwhelming and rapid success. Knowing Moguel was the business and practice management guru of the pair, Dr. Yousefia trusted her completely with all but the squarely medical aspects of their business venture.

"I have to thank him for his trust in me. He's been my longtime client, so he and I have worked together for many years. While he's taking care of the standardized protocols and medical protocols that need to be implemented, he's really entrusted everything else outside of the medical details to me. Dr. Yousefia takes care of the medical aspect and I handle everything else. He was like, 'This is your little baby project, you do with it what you like,'" recalls Moguel.

It was a smart move on Dr. Yousefia's part to entrust the creation of this new medspa to Moguel, as in addition to her general business and medical practice management expertise, she also happened to fit their primary target demographic. Moguel admits, "I'm 45, and when you talk about the ideal demographics or who you're marketing to, I'm somehow relatable to most people that are seeking medspa services. So I have so much exposure in terms of who I talked to, who I interact with, what is in demand and what treatments people would want."

Creating a Hidden Haven From the World

Moguel drew inspiration from her own life experience in a high stress career, imagining what she would look for in a medspa designed to help clients escape the stressful world outside. She states, "Handling the finances of doctors for so many years is extremely stressful. You're in charge of every single penny that comes in the door. Even when you go on vacation, no matter what you do, you're always on. What I really wanted to create is something completely opposite of that in that world."

Having worked with physicians for a long time, Moguel knew she wanted to steer clear of the frequently sterile atmosphere of a doctor's office, dominated by light, neutral colors. She knew that to create the true escape from the bustling world outside she envisioned, the space couldn't feel like a doctor's office. It needed to be a relaxing haven that didn't come with the automatic tension that sets in for many people when they're all too aware they are in a doctor's office. Moguel knew that the right tone had to be set even before the patient entered the building, meticulously crafting every element to ease patients into a relaxed state of mind, starting with the location. Her first decision was to pass up the opportunity to be located on Ventura Boulevard, a move that might have been helpful for their visibility, but wouldn't have provided the private haven she was seeking. Instead, Moguel found the perfect retreat from the hustle and bustle in the serene French Quarter in Woodland Hills.



"The French Quarter, with its brick walls covered in dangling vines is really beautiful. Instead of being on the main street, I thought, 'Let's be hidden in the courtyard garden. Let's be tucked away. Let's be this hot hidden gem, this private retreat that you're not going to know about unless you know about us.' The location is very quiet. If you go outside, you can hear birds chirping. You can see the vines dangling outside the windows," she explains.

Upon entering the doors of La Belle Vie Medspa patients are welcomed by the soft sounds of tinkling water coming from the waterfall-shaped fountains in each room, soothing smells and lightly dimmed lights creating a warm glow.

"It sets the tone for the experience the patient is going to have. Let's face it. They're a lot of choices of where people can go, but why are they going to come to you? These are all optional services that patients are electing to get, so you have to figure out what sets you apart." Moguel continues, "To me, that means everything, because being in a really high stressful environment, I know exactly what I don't want. Having two young children, I know how busy life is, so I wanted to create something that stops time and gives people, even if it's on their lunch break, the refreshed and revitalized feeling you get when you're doing something for yourself, which not everyone understands."

The Perfect Patient Experience

Moguel's attention to detail doesn't stop with the design and atmosphere, though. She has taken into account every minute of their clients' experiences, constantly looking for ways to improve that experience, no matter how seemingly insignificant. Moguel knows well the impact those small details can have, and how even the tiniest detail can make a lasting impression, whether good or bad.

She explains, "There's so much that goes on behind the scenes. We take our time with the patient. If you're doing a minimally invasive treatment and go to an immense spa with a high turnover, you may have only five minutes to perform this service. You're more inclined to minimize how much time you're going to allow somebody to numb. All these details matter. Here, we ensure we have ample space and time to allow for the numbing to take full effect. Even though I think we have the best compounded numbing cream on the market, I'm always looking and keeping a feel for what else is out there. If you watch any of my behind-the-scenes videos, you'll see me constantly testing out different numbing creams to make sure that we're partnering with the best."

Moguel and Dr. Yousefia go above and beyond for their patients. The team focus their energy on always being patient driven, continuously considering whether there is something new they could implement to make the patient's experience more comfortable. This means keeping a constant eye on industry innovations in treatments, techniques, devices, new product launches and more to ensure they are providing the best patient experience possible.

"If there's something that's going provide patient with a more comfortable experience, then we need to make sure we implement that. I think being patient driven and result driven also affords us the greater opportunity. If the patient's not comfortable, how are they going to refer somebody and how are they going to come back for their second treatment? Ultimately everything that happens at a medspa is non-surgical, so it's never a one and done; it's more of a series. It's really about ensuring that positive patient experience from before they even enter the door, through every step of their appointment and after they leave," Moguel says.

Resilience In the Face of Adversity: Icon '23

After perfecting every last detail involved in creating an ideal patient experience and true escape from the world at La Belle Vie Medspa & Wellness Center, Moguel and Dr. Yousefia experienced the ultimate disappointment when it was time to move in. Moguel relates, "The day that we got the keys to this location was March of

2020. The day they announced the stay-at-home orders was the day that I had a uHaul move into our newly constructed business. That was really disheartening, but despite all of these opposing forces, everything kept falling into place. It just feels like the stars aligned and I am where I'm supposed to be, doing what I'm meant to be doing."

She admits that the pandemic and the business decisions they made despite this set back ended up helping them flourish once the quarantine was over. "It probably afforded us opportunities to set ourselves apart from other medspas. When the world was quiet, we were pushing hard. I was like, 'Maybe we're closed and we can't do business, but that doesn't mean we can't do content and marketing,'" explains Moguel.

Moguel was shocked when La Belle Vie Medspa was recently awarded the title of 'Best Medspa' at the prestigious Iconic '23 awards, which recognizes excellence in aesthetic and wellness services across the US, Canada and the UK. "It's one of those things that you never believe is possible until you keep pushing and pushing, and then, all of a sudden, it's happening and you're like, 'Wow, it is possible. It's actually happening.' I'm so floored." Moguel continues, "It's a testament to our team's unwavering dedication and hard work during what was an incredibly challenging time. To transition from that period of uncertainty when we opened to receiving this prestigious recognition is truly monumental."

Moguel recalls her surprise when patients started recognizing her from her videos on social media, saying, "You just don't realize the impact of that. People watch and feel like they can relate to you. It's almost like having a network of friends that come here, and you get updates on there on their lives as they check in and out of their appointments."

Female Empowerment & Friendship

Moguel has found the relationships that form through her work and the community of friends that end up forming are the most rewarding aspects of her career. The ability to help patients, who end up becoming friends, feel refreshed amidst stressful careers and the ups and downs of life is what inspired Moguel to approach this venture in the first place. "We really build a relationship with the patients that come in, and get to know them on a personal level. You honestly become friends with everybody, get to hear what they're going through in their lives and know that the work you're doing is making a difference. It's really become a kind of network of women who help each other, a women's social support group. Sometimes I'll see somebody walk in the door, and I can just tell that they're stuck in their own head and bustling thoughts. Then I have the ability to pull them out of that, help them be present, ask them, 'Hey, are you having a beautiful day? Are you feeling fabulous today?' and make people smile," Moguel says.

She understands all too well the need to find a haven to escape from the rest of the world. Moguel states, "You can't pour from an empty cup; you have to be fulfilled. You have to do something for yourself that gives you that breath of fresh air, something that makes you think, 'I feel good. I can go out and do good, help people. We're helping create that, and in creating that, it makes me feel good and gives me fulfillment." She adds, "We get some patients that really need this. They look forward to coming here, no matter their individual circumstances. Knowing that we're helping somebody get through the week and that we're providing a moment of peace and escape from the daily chaos is an amazing feeling. Even when my employees come in the door, I'm always like, 'You guys, today's going to be a beautiful day.' I just constantly try to set the tone and make sure that everybody is in the right frame of mind. We have to feel good in order for our patients to feel good because it really does go full circle. Ultimately, all of that leads back to the patient being happy and the fulfillment you get knowing that you're helping somebody."

Things to Come:

With their impressive list of celebrity clientele, Moguel sees them eventually opening another location in New York, but is in no rush to grow too fast too soon. "You have to remember to be humble and to have gratitude. It's when you lead with greed that everything falls apart. I don't want to expand too quickly and lose our spark here. We want every patient to feel that little spark of happiness they feel when they come to us," she explains.

Moguel leaves other medical aesthetics and medspa professionals, whether already owners or aspiring medspa or aesthetic practice owners, this advice, "Ultimately, I think it's important that we remember to support each other, and that nobody's in competition with one another. You don't want to compare yourself to others because it's not the same experience, the same tools, the same clinicians and it's not the same service. Don't pay heed to the outside noise. Just stay focused, do good work and have good intentions and that's what's going to build your business." ME

Rebecca Lane is the managing editor of *MedEsthetics*.

INGREDIENT SPOTLIGHT BY TONY SCIANNA



How Vitamin C is Used in Skin Care

Vitamin C offers a variety of skin health benefits and can potentially combine with a multitude of other powerhouse ingredients to enhance its effects.

Vitamin C is one of the most common ingredients in skin care, acclaimed for its ability to protect skin from environmental stressors, diminish dark spots, brighten complexion and reduce signs of aging. The naturally occurring antioxidant is often used to treat hyperpigmentation and skin laxity and promote overall skin health.

"If we were to sum up the three main properties of Vitamin C, they would be: potent antioxidant to help improve skin health; skin brightener to effectively treat hyperpigmentation; and collagen producer to improve skin firmness," said Alisar Zaher, Ph.D., senior director of research and clinical development at Revision Skincare.

Vitamin C protects the skin from oxidative stress by sequentially donating electrons to neutralize free radicals. The exposure of skin to UV light generates free radicals that have the potential to start chain or cascade reactions that damage the cells. Oxidative stress can trigger cellular events that lead to collagen breakdown, inflammation and skin aging.[1]

According to Dr. Zaher, patients are recommended to incorporate vitamin C as part of their "A, B and C" of skin care. The "A" represents vitamin A, "B" is the broad-spectrum protection with a sunscreen and "C" represents vitamin C or L-ascorbic acid, which is the purest form of vitamin C.

Vitamin C can be combined with sunscreen or retinol to improve anti-aging benefits, as well as other common skin care ingredients like hydroquinone, niacinamide, kojic acid and tranexamic acid. The ingredients all have different pathways, and some may not be proper for all patients, depending on the concentration and season of use, according to Zaher.

"What is truly unique about vitamin C is that more is more," Zaher said. "This vitamin itself has many unique pathways within the skin that leads to skin health."

Ascorbic acid can be unstable and difficult to use in formulations. It can easily degrade in water, as well as when exposed to oxygen and metal ions. Zaher suggests maintaining the stability by incorporating ingredients that remain stable in low PH formulations, like ferulic acid and vitamin E.

"This degradation process is accompanied by a color change in the product, which turns yellowish to brown over time," Dr. Zaher said. "To mitigate the stability challenges faced with ascorbic acid, modifications to the chemical structure include binding ionic salts to the molecule to produce sodium ascorbyl phosphate or magnesium ascorbyl phosphate. Another strategy utilizes lipophilic derivatives to produce ascorbyl 6-palmitate and tetrahexyldecyl ascorbate."

Zaher also recommends the Duke Antioxidant patent, which outlines the formulation parameters required for effective delivery of vitamin C into skin, and encapsulation into delivery systems like liposomes.

Although L-ascorbic acid has traditionally been the standard for vitamin C, Zaher suggests that the tide has shifted to a preference of tetrahexyldecyl (THD) ascorbate.

"This molecule is a lipid-loving version of vitamin C containing long chains of hexyldecanoyl; think of long chains of vegetable lipids which have significant emollient properties," Zaher said. "THD ascorbate is formulated at skin neutral pH and is super easy to formulate with. Formulating with the THD ascorbate allows one to produce serums, lotions and thicker creams." ME

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Tony Scianna is the associate editor of *MedEsthetics.*

Scar Treatments

Scar treatments are a significant sector of medical aesthetics, and include a multitude of products designed to effectively fade, manage and treat scars. These skin topicals and aesthetic devices are especially effective at targeting scar tissue to restore the skin's natural look and feel.



The Aerolase **Era Elite** device excels in reducing and removing scars through its targeted approach. With its cutting-edge ablative technology, the Era Elite selectively removes damaged skin layers, stimulating collagen production and skin resurfacing to offer patients more radiant, smoother and tighter skin.
Contact: 914.345.8300, aerolase.com



The **Collagen P.I.N.** from Induction Therapies is designed to improve the look of facial acne scars in adults, delivering a better treatment experience for microneedling patients. Procedures last as little as 30 minutes and can be spaced up to four weeks apart for smoother, brighter and healthier-looking skin.
Contact: 877.746.4407, collagenpin.com



Skinluma **Scarvana** is a triple-action scar gel combining hydrating sodium hyaluronate crosspolymer, soothing licorice extract and occlusive silicone to target scar tissue. The formula is completely free of alcohol, parabens and fragrance, and is available under private label.
Contact: 800.874.9686, skinluma.com



FotoFinder **Meesma** is a handheld imaging solution for aesthetics that lets you take photos of facial and body treatments. Meesma offers four different light modes to help you assess your patient's skin conditions: neutral light, cross-polarized, parallel-polarized and Wood's light.
Contact: 888.501.0805, fotofinder-systems.com

QMS MEDICOSMETICS DIGITAL SKIN ANALYZER USES IMAGE ANALYSIS AI FOR PRECISE RESULTS



QMS Medicosmetics uses AI real-time analysis in its Digital Skin Analyzer for accurate skin results and personalized beauty routines. The artificial intelligence used is an image analysis algorithm. The AI has been trained with more than 100,000 images and associated information to accurately examine and recognize different parts of the face for different skin categories. The data labeling and evaluation were done by dermatologists and cosmetic experts. The digital analysis acts precisely and quickly to detect details in the skin that human eyes cannot perceive. It is also less prone to error due to its objectivity in analyzing information. Based on the results, personalized recommendations for products and treatments can be made directly - exactly matching the individual needs. Another advantage to AI is the convenience of doing the analysis at home without an appointment.

10XBIO'S NOVEL SUBMENTAL BODY CONTOURING DRUG CLINICAL TRIAL

10xBio has announced the completed enrollment for a repeat treatment study of its novel injectable drug for submental body contouring, 10XB101, a proprietary formulation of polidocanol, which is approved in the U.S. for vein sclerotherapy. 10xBio is repurposing polidocanol for body contouring applications in aesthetic medicine. 10XB101 is an alternative to body contouring devices, potentially offering benefits like enhanced patient tolerability, shorter treatment intervals and more. A total of 51 patients will participate in the randomized, double-blind study across three treatment groups, including a placebo control group. Patients will receive multiple injections of 10XB101 in a predefined pattern and can receive multiple treatments spaced one month apart.

APEX LABS CBD INTRODUCES PICO IV CBD ISOLATE FOR IV THERAPY



Apex Labs CBD has launched Pico IV, a CBD isolate for intravenous (IV) therapy. This first-of-its-kind sterile CBD solution can bring the many benefits of cannabidiol and the hemp world to IV therapy clinics across the country and complement a variety of functional or regenerative medicine offerings. The desire for a CBD intravenous solution has been present for years, as other methods of CBD usage, like ingestion, topical or sublingual, don't offer the same levels of system absorption as an IV solution. While recent developments in technology led to water-soluble CBD, and more recently, nanoemulsions, the team at Apex Labs CBD created patent-pending technology that reduced the molecule size even further down to the size of a picometer, allowing for a sterile filtration process and maximum system absorptions. Pico IV is currently only available to licensed IV therapy providers for online purchase after member registration.

SKINSTYLUS RECEIVES FDA CLEARANCE FOR FACIAL ACNE SCARS

BeautyHealth's SkinStylus has received an FDA clearance for facial acne scarring, making it the only microneedling device FDA-cleared for both the face and abdomen, according to BeautyHealth. The SkinStylus SteriLock MicroSystem is intended to be used as a microneedling treatment to improve the appearance

of facial acne scars in Fitzpatrick skin types I, II, and III in patients aged 22 years and older. It is categorized by the FDA as a Class II Medical Device. SkinStylus is already FDA-cleared for the indication to improve the appearance of surgical or traumatic hypertrophic scars on the abdomen in adults aged 22 years and older. This was supported by the clinical data that was submitted to FDA during the clearance process. Some of BeautyHealth's other brands include Hydrafacial for hydra dermabrasion and Keravive for scalp health.

LEXARIA TO CONDUCT HUMAN CLINICAL STUDY ON DEHYDRATECH-CBD FOR WEIGHT LOSS



Lexaria has announced a human clinical study to examine DehydraTECH-CBD for purposes of diabetes control and weight loss. Preclinical studies on animals showed that the drug lowered blood glucose levels by 19.9%, provided an increase in locomotor activity, lowered triglyceride levels by more than 25%, lowered blood urea nitrogen levels by 27.9% and lowered overall body weight by 7%, sustained over 8 weeks. As a result of the successful pre-clinical results, Lexaria has planned to undertake a clinical study to investigate whether any of these improvements are also evident in humans. Study design is currently underway by Lexaria, which will be followed by submission to an independent review board to gain necessary approvals. DehydraTECH-CBD's ability to reduce blood sugar levels in animals has been encouraging for the company and warrants the desire for additional investigation. Limited research, mostly in animal studies, indicates that generic CBD might be ineffective in controlling blood sugars.

COCOKIND RELEASES SENSITIVE SKIN FRIENDLY CHLOROPHYLL DISCOLORATION SERUM



Cocokind has released its chlorophyll discoloration serum, a sensitive skin-friendly spot fading formula that utilizes 1% alpha arbutin with chlorophyll, licorice root and panthenol to reduce the look of discoloration, post-blemish marks and signs of UV damage. The ingredient incorporates a green hue that, according to the company, absorbs without a trace, leaving a radiant glow. The formula is fragrance free and jelly-like in texture. According to consumer study results, 98% agreed the serum works well for sensitive skin, 95% agreed that their skin looked brighter and healthier, and 85% agreed that facial redness had been visibly neutralized.

EVENTS

November 2-5 ASDS Annual Meeting, Hyatt Regency, Chicago, Illinois, Contact: education@asds.net, 847.956.0900, asds.net

November 17-18 IAFA 2023 Aesthetic Symposium, Intercontinental Hotel, Miami, Florida, Contact: 877.759.7848, iafa.co

December 1-3 Beauty Through Science New York, New York Hilton, Midtown, New York, New York Contact: info@beautythroughscience.com, bts-newyork.com/2023

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Florida's Plastic Surgery Bill is a Game Changer for BBLs

The new bill has been praised by physicians and industry experts. In the first of a two-part series, we go deep into the contents of the bill and how it affects plastic surgeons in Florida.

Florida's first plastic surgery bill, HB 1471, which details specific training and educational measures to properly perform gluteal fat grafting procedures, went into effect on July 1, 2023. The bill mandates the use of ultrasound guidance to ensure fat is only being injected into the subcutaneous space. It also prohibits surgeons from meeting patients for the first time on the day of the surgery and forbids them from delegating the surgical procedure to a nurse or an assistant.

According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, gluteal fat grafts, more popularly known as Brazilian Butt Lifts (BBLs), are known to have one of the highest mortality rates of any cosmetic surgery. Despite being considered one of the most dangerous cosmetic surgeries, it has also been one of the fastest-growing cosmetic procedures in the world. Per the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery's Global Survey, the number of BBLs performed globally increased by 77.6% from 2015 to 2021.

The new Florida State law requires physicians to use "ultrasound guidance when placing and navigating the cannula and injecting fat into the subcutaneous space," as well as, "maintain the ultrasound video recording in the patient's medical record, including the time and the date stamp."

"During BBL surgery, it is crucial to avoid going too deep and injecting fat into superior and inferior gluteal veins because the fat can then travel to the lungs, causing a pulmonary fat embolism," said S. Alexander Earle, M.D., a double board-certified plastic surgeon in Miami. "Pulmonary fat embolism is the major cause of BBL deaths. The ultrasound imaging allows the surgeon to see exactly where to place the fat, which decreases the risk of injuring gluteal veins while improving aesthetic results."

Dr. Earle, founder of Pure Plastic Surgery in Miami, started incorporating ultrasound technology into BBL procedures in 2019. He also designed his own version of the procedure, called the South Beach Butt Lift, that uses ultrasound guidance and small, hidden liposuction incisions that provide a signature upside-down, heart shape with proportionate and discrete results.

"The BBL safety law in Florida is a necessary action taken to save lives," Dr. Earle said. "Fortunately, I realized this back in 2019, and to better protect our patients at PURE Plastic Surgery, we adopted ultrasound imaging technology to provide the visual improvement needed to perform BBLs under safer conditions. The Florida law did not change the way we perform BBL's at PURE because we were ahead of the curve."

The law has been praised by industry experts, including the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery (AACS) and the American Board of Cosmetic Surgery (ABCS). Alex Sobel, D.O., FAACS, current president of AACS and past president of ABCS, as well as the owner of Anderson Sobel Cosmetic Surgery, applauds the legislation for focusing on education, for both patients and surgeons.

"It is an important bill for patient safety, public awareness and especially surgeon awareness," Dr. Sobel said. "Cosmetic surgery is just not taught in conventional training scenarios, so there's a complete training deficit in many cosmetic procedures and especially BBLs because there is no reason for a resident to ever be trained in it. In fact, most residents want to be trained, and have to take vacation time to go study it. If you haven't been trained, if you haven't studied, if you don't care about this and don't have sufficient experience and mentorship, you shouldn't be doing the procedure. That's what House Bill 1471 really captures. They got it right."

Look out for part 2 of this series in the MedEsthetics January/February 2024 issue! ME



Tony Scianna is the associate editor of *MedEsthetics.*

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